

What is claimed is:

[Claim 1] In a motor vehicle comprising a firewall extending between an engine compartment and a passenger compartment, having at least one opening therethrough for passage of a vehicle component, a sound attenuating dashmat mounted to the passenger compartment side of the firewall and having an opening in registry with the at least one opening in the firewall, and a vehicle component passing through the openings in the firewall and the dashmat, the improvement comprising:

a component bridge surrounding the openings in the firewall and the dashmat and extending upwardly from an upper surface of the dashmat toward the passenger compartment in cooperative register with at least a portion of a perimeter of the vehicle component and with the dashmat, the component bridge having sound absorbing and sound barrier components to attenuate sound that passes through the openings in the firewall and the dashmat and above the upper surface of the dashmat.

[Claim 2] A motor vehicle according to claim 1 wherein the component bridge is removably attached to the dashmat for selectively installing the component bridge in register with the vehicle component to interrupt the transmission of sound from the engine compartment into the passenger compartment of the motor vehicle, and selectively removing the component bridge from the dashmat when no component is present necessitating the installation of the component bridge.

[Claim 3] A motor vehicle according to claim 1 wherein the component bridge is removably attached to the dashmat with a tether.

[Claim 4] A motor vehicle according to claim 2 wherein the removable attachment is selected from the group consisting of a tab, a snap, a rivet, and a stud.

[Claim 5] A motor vehicle according to claim 2 wherein the removable attachment comprises a strap.

[Claim 6] A motor vehicle according to claim 1 wherein the component bridge further comprises an upwardly extending side wall and a planar top wall of a sound barrier material.

[Claim 7] A motor vehicle according to claim 6 wherein the sound barrier material comprises a plastic.

[Claim 8] A motor vehicle according to claim 6 wherein the sound barrier material is selected from the group consisting of polypropylene or a thermoplastic olefin.

[Claim 9] A motor vehicle according to claim 6 wherein the component bridge further comprises a sound absorbing material mounted with the side wall and the planar top wall.

[Claim 10] A motor vehicle according to claim 9 wherein the sound absorbing material comprises a low density, porous material.

[Claim 11] A motor vehicle according to claim 9 wherein the sound absorbing material is selected from the group consisting of an expanded flexible polyurethane, a flexible fibrous material, a non-woven glass fiber mat, and a shoddy cotton.

[Claim 12] A motor vehicle according to claim 6 wherein the component bridge further comprises a sound absorbing material.

[Claim 13] A motor vehicle according to claim 12 wherein the sound absorbing material is bonded to the barrier layer along an inner surface of one of the side wall and the top wall.

[Claim 14] A motor vehicle according to claim 1 wherein the component bridge is in register with at least a perimeter of the vehicle component and with the dashmat.

[Claim 15] A sound attenuating dashmat adapted to be mounted to a passenger compartment side of a vehicle firewall, the dashmat having an opening adapted for registry with an opening in the firewall, the vehicle having a vehicle component passing through the opening in the firewall, the dashmat comprising:

a component bridge surrounding the opening in the dashmat and adapted to extend upwardly from an upper surface of the dashmat toward the passenger compartment in cooperative register with at least a portion of a perimeter of the vehicle component and with the dashmat, the component bridge having sound absorbing and sound barrier components to attenuate sound that passes through the openings in the firewall and the dashmat and above the upper surface of the dashmat when the dashmat is attached to the passenger compartment side of the vehicle firewall.

[Claim 16] A sound attenuating dashmat according to claim 15 wherein the component bridge is removably attached to the dashmat to enable the selective installation of the component bridge in register with the vehicle component to interrupt the transmission of sound from the engine compartment into the passenger compartment of the motor vehicle, and the selective removal of the component bridge from the dashmat when no component is present necessitating the installation of the component bridge.

[Claim 17] A sound attenuating dashmat according to claim 15 wherein the component bridge is removably attached to the dashmat with a tether.

[Claim 18] A sound attenuating dashmat according to claim 16 wherein the removable attachment is selected from the group consisting of a tab, a snap, a rivet, and a stud.

[Claim 19] A sound attenuating dashmat according to claim 16 wherein the removable attachment comprises a strap.

[Claim 20] A sound attenuating dashmat according to claim 15 wherein the component bridge further comprises an upwardly extending side wall and a planar top wall of a sound barrier material.

[Claim 21] A sound attenuating dashmat according to claim 20 wherein the sound barrier material comprises a plastic.

[Claim 22] A sound attenuating dashmat according to claim 20 wherein the sound barrier material is selected from the group consisting of polypropylene or a thermoplastic olefin.

[Claim 23] A sound attenuating dashmat according to claim 20 wherein the component bridge further comprises a sound absorbing material mounted with the side wall and the planar top wall.

[Claim 24] A sound attenuating dashmat according to claim 23 wherein the sound absorbing material comprises a low density, porous material.

[Claim 25] A sound attenuating dashmat according to claim 23 wherein the sound absorbing material is selected from the group consisting of an expanded flexible polyurethane, a flexible fibrous material, a non-woven glass fiber mat, and a shoddy cotton.

[Claim 26] A sound attenuating dashmat according to claim 20 wherein the component bridge further comprises a sound absorbing material.

[Claim 27] A sound attenuating dashmat according to claim 26 wherein the sound absorbing material is bonded to the barrier layer along an inner surface of one of the side wall and the top wall.

[Claim 28] A sound attenuating dashmat according to claim 15 wherein the component bridge is adapted for registry with at least a perimeter of the vehicle component and with the dashmat.